

NARCISSISM CONSTRUCTION: AN ANALYSIS OF FOMO IN PAULA HAWKINS' *THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN*

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ABSTRACT

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is prevalent in society nowadays and can lead to narcissism. This research aims to analyze how FoMO constructs narcissism in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*. Three characters in the novel, Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson, are selected to represent how FoMO constructs narcissism in Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*. The research was conducted by applying the FoMO process, the FoMO scale, and Freud's psychoanalytic theory to understand how FoMO constructs narcissism. The research method was qualitative, with data written in text form, and researchers acted as the research instruments to gather primary and secondary data. Primary data for this research were taken from Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*, consisting of words, utterances, and quotations. Meanwhile, secondary data sources were obtained from e-books, journals, and articles. This research found that the characters suffer from social and news FoMO, indicated by the perception of missing out and compulsive behavior in maintaining social connections. Furthermore, FoMO indirectly constructs their narcissism, which is characterized by megalomania, self-love, and personality traits.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has gained significant attention in contemporary society, which is influenced by instant connectivity and exposure to dominant social media platforms accessed through digital devices (van Rooij et al., 2018). Thus, it is important to understand the concept of FoMO because it portrays a psychological construct in contemporary society related to levels of online social engagement and problematic technology use (Elhai et al., 2021). Further, FoMO is discomfort feeling that others may have valuable experiences, but one person does not have those experiences (Przybylski et al., 2013). It is accompanied by a strong desire to know what other people are doing (Brailovskaia et al., 2023, p. 2).

FoMO is a relatively recent psychological concept that has gained prominence due to the pervasive use of social media (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). Previous studies have supported this concept, stating that new social media phenomena, including FoMO, emerge in various forms (Rosida et al., 2022). The rise of social media has facilitated the rapid awareness of FoMO, as individuals constantly encounter snapshots of others' lives, contributing to its current recognition (Reagle, 2015). Nowadays, individuals are increasingly surrounded by extensive



information about the activities of others, leading to ongoing uncertainty regarding their accomplishments and whether they are on the right track in their lives. This extensive information can lead to a lack of confidence as people compare their everyday experiences with the seemingly perfect lives presented online (Vogel et al., 2014). When individuals are unaware of the impact of FoMO, it can lead to the development of narcissistic tendencies. These tendencies are portrayed through a heightened need for validation and approval from others, particularly via social media, which fosters self-promotion and superficial image management, characteristics of narcissism (Fioravanti et al., 2021).

Further, narcissism is a condition where individuals have an insatiable need for compliments and prioritization (Susanto et al., 2021). Narcissism is identified through symptoms such as self-absorption, grandiosity, exploitation of others, and a lack of empathy (di Giacomo et al., 2023). It can be concluded that narcissism is a personality disorder characterized by a strong need for attention and admiration, along with a lack of empathy for others. Recognizing narcissism is important for understanding its effects and finding ways to address it.

The concept of FoMO and its correlation with narcissism have become distinguished subjects in literature because of their relevance to modern human behavior. The concept of FoMO has become increasingly significant as the internet and social media have established themselves at the core of human life (Akat et al., 2023). Authors and literary works have explored the concept of FoMO and narcissism as they reflect the complex interplay between individual psychology and societal influences. Literature can provide thought-provoking ideologies, become a source of inspiration, and transform life perspectives, facilitating societal change (Murmu, 2023).

One literary work that explores the concept of FoMO and narcissism is Paula Hawkins' novel *The Girl on the Train*, published in 2015. The novel examines the complexity of individuals and their effects on each other through a journey into the lives of people living beside the tracks and those travelling on the trains (Taylor, 2015). It provides a rich literary landscape to explore the relationship between FoMO and narcissistic tendencies in contemporary society. This complexity is illustrated through the intertwined lives of the three characters: Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson.

Rachel Watson, the first character in Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*, is a troubled woman who cannot let go of her past. Her terrible memories include when her ex-husband, Tom Watson, decided to leave her (Hetami & Purwanto, 2019). She rides the train daily, watching her old neighborhood and imagining the perfect lives of the people there, even naming her ideal couple "Jess" (Megan Hipwell) and "Jason" (Scott Hipwell). This behavior portrays her FoMO as she seeks the happiness that she believes others have. Moreover, Megan's disappearance triggers Rachel's narcissistic tendencies, stemming from the sense of power and authority she believes she possesses.

Megan Hipwell, the second character in Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*, appears to have a perfect life. Megan appears to be a happy wife with a faithful husband (Roisiah et al., 2021).



However, Megan is unhappy and restless, as proven by her feeling restless and dissatisfied constantly seeking excitement and validation from others. This contradiction reflects her FoMO, as she fears leading a boring and unremarkable life than others. Megan's actions, including her affairs, show her narcissistic tendencies, as she craves attention and affirmation from others to feel worthy. Megan's need to be admired and loved by others reveals her insecurity and desire to escape her inner turmoil, highlighting how she uses her charm to mask her vulnerabilities.

Moreover, the third character in Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train* is Anna Watson. Rachel's ex-husband, Tom Watson, cheated on her with Anna. After marrying Tom, Anna seems to have a perfect life, which is the life that Rachel lost. However, Anna constantly compares herself to others and wants to maintain her image of a perfect wife and mother, mirroring FoMO symptoms. Furthermore, her narcissistic tendencies are shown through her need to feel superior to Rachel and to be admired for her beauty and lifestyle. This desire for attention and validation reveals her insecurities and idealized self-image.

This study will present how FoMO constructs narcissistic symptoms that occur in Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson. Narcissistic symptoms will identify their narcissism through Freudian psychoanalysis theory. The concept of narcissism by Freud is chosen to be the main approach. What makes the theory relevant along with those issues is that it concerns the function and development of human psychology. Further, the research objective of this study is to present how FoMO constructs narcissism in Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, the researchers analyze how FoMO constructs narcissism in the novel. FoMO includes two processes: firstly, the perception of missing out, followed by compulsive behavior to maintain social connections (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). The first process involves the perception of missing out on rewarding experiences, leading to anxiety and apprehension about being excluded from social activities. This perception is driven by constant exposure to the activities and experiences of others through social media or another platform, creating a fear of losing connection or not keeping up with others' experiences. This can lead to negative emotional states, such as social inferiority, loneliness, or intense rage. The second process is compulsive behavior to maintain social connections. FoMO is the constant need to remain connected with others and is positively linked to interdependence on self-construction (Dogan, 2019). Researchers will try to explain the FoMO processes described above to understand the symptoms and identify FoMO from the novel in this study.

Further, a related study on FoMO, which was conducted by Alt (2015), divides FoMO into three scales. The first scale is social FoMO, defined as the fear of missing out on social interactions and experiences within people's social networks (Alt, 2015). The second scale is news FoMO, which Alt (2015) defines as the fear of missing out on news updates and information, reflecting the desire to stay informed about current events or breaking news. The third scale is commercial FoMO, which describes the fear of missing out on commercial information, such as discounts, sales, coupons, and other promotional activities. As in the



previous study, these FoMO scales will be used to categorize the types of FoMO experienced by characters in the research. However, the researchers have divided the FoMO scales into two categories, as they are relevant to the present research. The researchers have chosen to apply the social FoMO and news FoMO scales, excluding commercial FoMO for several key reasons. First, the present research focuses on social interactions and information consumption, making social and news FoMO more relevant to the study's objectives. Second, limiting the scales to these two categories allows for greater specificity and depth in the analysis, ensuring that the research remains focused and manageable. Additionally, mental evidence in the novel suggests that social and news FoMO have a more significant impact on the development of narcissism. Therefore, the decision to exclude commercial FoMO helps maintain a clear and directed research scope, optimizing the use of resources and enhancing the study's overall validity.

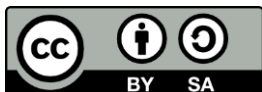
In the context of narcissism, megalomania and self-love are characteristics that indicate someone suffering from narcissism (Freud & Strachley, 1966). These characteristics will make understanding each character's behavior easier, indicating that they experience narcissism in the novel. Firstly, megalomania is a characteristic that indicates an excessive sense of self-importance and delusions of grandeur. Narcissism is manifested when an individual has an inflated view of their power, significance, or omnipotence. Further, the second characteristic is self-love, which refers to the perception of overvaluing oneself. This focus on oneself characterizes the individual as a love object, where they direct desire towards their body and mind, finding satisfaction and pleasure in self-regard and self-admiration (Freud & Strachley, 1966).

A study of narcissism was conducted, which also used the novel *The Girl on the Train* but focused only on Megan Hipwell as a sample of narcissistic behavior (Roisiah et al., 2021). They found that the character exhibited narcissistic behaviors, such as having a big ego, overconfidence, exploitation of interpersonal relationships, arrogance, and a deficient social conscience. Moreover, they found that rationalization and projection as part of the defense mechanism were the reasons why the character exhibited narcissistic behavior. In this study, although it does not discuss the defense mechanism, the researchers use FoMO as the trigger of narcissistic behavior from Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson.

Another study of narcissism has also been conducted by exploring the connection between literature and psychology (Pratama & Aji, 2017). They found that the trigger for narcissism in the personality of Willy Wonka, the character in their research, was his flamboyance, innovation, stubbornness, arrogance, and authority. These personality traits are connected to the development of narcissistic personality disorder, including his isolation, fear of betrayal, and societal influence. In the present research, these personality traits will become supporting data to prove that personalities can also trigger narcissism.

3. METHODOLOGY

Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train* is the object of study in this research. Meanwhile, qualitative research will become the research method. The qualitative research method is used to understand the meaning of experience through written texts, interviews, or focus group



conversations (Grossoehme, 2014). By conducting this method, the researchers can help to describe the found data in more detail related to FoMO construct narcissism in the novel. The FoMO process and scales were analyzed to understand how FoMO is described in the novel. Furthermore, to prove that FoMO constructs narcissism, the researchers used Freud's theory of narcissism to explain how that experience is connected to the characters in the novel. The researchers also connected the personalities of the characters to their motives for experiencing narcissism.

Three characters in the novel, Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson, are selected to represent how FoMO constructs narcissism in the object of the study. Researchers become research instruments in this study. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the research instrument, directly influencing data collection and analysis (Geddis-Regan et al., 2022). The primary data for this research were taken from Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*. The data consisted of words, utterances, and quotations. Additionally, secondary data sources were obtained from e-books, journals, and articles. Those data were presented in the form of explanations, citations, and quotations. The researchers followed the chronological steps to collect primary and secondary data: reading, identifying data, and interpreting.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and discussions will be divided into two subchapters based on the research objective. The first is FoMO in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*, and the second is FoMO constructs narcissism in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*.

4.1 FoMO in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*

This subchapter describes FoMO through the characters selected related to the research, comprising Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson. Those three characters have psychological problems related to internal and external conflicts. In addition, most of the conflicts they experience are linked to FoMO. It indirectly has influenced them to have psychological problems. The characters experiencing FoMO will be presented based on the FoMO scales and are examined in the frame of two factors: social FoMO and news FoMO.

4.1.1 Social FoMO

The perception of missing out on interaction and communication with others is placed in the social FoMO scale. Social FoMO is a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent, highlighting the anxiety related to missing out on social interactions and communications (Przybylski et al., 2013). Those who experience higher levels of social FoMO are more likely to maintain their connections out of fear of not being up to date with others (Alt, 2015). The definition of social FoMO emphasizes the importance of staying connected and up to date with others' activities, which is central to social FoMO. The following quotation represent Rachel Watson social FoMO in the object study:

'The thought of her there both thrills and disappoints me, and then I feel sick for feeling disappointed. I don't wish her ill, no matter how angry I was with her for cheating on Scott,



for shattering my illusions about my perfect couple... I sent Scott an email this morning.’ (Hawkins, 2015, p.82)

The quotation portrays the process of FoMO as Rachel experiences both thrills and disappointment due to her inability to maintain a connection with Megan. FoMO is sustained by rewarding experiences that arise from people’s desire for interpersonal attachments (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). Megan’s disappearance triggers Rachel’s FoMO, compelling her to stay connected and find out why Megan is missing. This social FoMO drives Rachel to send Scott an email to maintain their interaction regarding Megan’s disappearance. Social FoMO is fueled by the desire to share information with others (Alt, 2015). Moreover, Rachel does not limit her efforts to maintain her relationship with Scott regarding Megan Hipwell’s disappearance to just one instance.

Another quotation was presented as social FoMO suffered by Rachel: ‘Something felt off, but I realized eventually that it was just me. Still, the silence ringing in my ears sounded like voices, so I poured myself a glass of wine, and then another, and then I phoned Scott’ (Hawkins, 2015, p. 167). The quotation highlights Rachel’s deep sense of discomfort and loneliness. Her act of pouring wine and calling Scott reflects her attempts to insert herself into a situation to feel connected and recognized. Driven by her FoMO on the unfolding events and interactions, her sense of FoMO conquered her anxiety about losing the connection, prompting her to dare to call Scott. The FoMO process is also portrayed through Rachel’s behavior, as she maintains those social connections between her and Scott.

Megan Hipwell also experienced the perception of missing out on maintaining interactions with other people. The following quotation illustrates Megan Hipwell about her social FoMO: ‘When the session ended, I asked him if he wanted to have a drink with me. He said no, he couldn’t, it wouldn’t be appropriate’ (Hawkins, 2015, p.54). According to the quotation, Megan wants to spend more time with her therapist, Dr. Kamal Abdic. Further, Megan’s request to have a drink with her therapist illustrates a strong desire to connect socially, which indicates social FoMO. Social FoMO is identified through a strong desire to stay connected with others (Alt, 2015). This behavior also reflects FoMO in how Megan tries to maintain her interaction with her therapist and communicate with him because she feels comfortable and gains new experiences that she never had before. Thus, Megan is experiencing anxiety about missing a potential social opportunity or connection.

In another behavior, Anna Watson experiences FoMO and wants to keep interacting with Rachel to maintain her connection with her husband, Tom Watson. She wants to communicate and interact with Rachel. However, the problem is that Rachel was her husband’s ex-wife. The following quotation will illustrate Anna’s social FoMO:

‘It’s odd, because I know now that all this time I’ve been hating the wrong woman, and yet knowing this doesn’t make me dislike Rachel any less. If anything, seeing her like this, calm, concerned, sober, I’m starting to see what she once was, and I resent her more, because I’m starting to see what he must have seen in her. What he must have loved.’ (Hawkins, 2015, p. 258)



The utterance from Anna reveals her social FoMO because it highlights her incapability and jealousy regarding Rachel, her husband's ex-wife. Incapability and jealousy are closely related to FoMO, as they involve resentment towards others who are perceived to be enjoying better experiences (Alt, 2015). Anna fears she perhaps cannot maintain her connection with her husband as she compares herself to Rachel, recognizing her positive qualities and what her husband must have loved. This comparison employs feelings of inadequacy and fear that she may not measure up to Rachel in her husband's eyes. Anna's feelings also reflect a desire for social validation from her husband. Through seeing Rachel's qualities, Anna feels a sense of competition and a fear that she might be less valued or appreciated than Rachel. Thus, Anna's social FoMO is encouraged by her insecurities and the constant need for validation from her husband to maintain their connection as a couple. Her jealousy and comparison with Rachel amplify her FoMO, exacerbating her feelings of inadequacy and rivalry. This dynamic portrays the deep impact of social FoMO on personal relationships and self-esteem.

4.1.2 News FoMO

Perception of FoMO-related news with someone, for instance, responding to reminders or getting updates via media site, defines news FoMO (Alt, 2015). In the object of the study, the characters have experienced or are aware of missing some information that they wanted to know.

The following quotation presents Rachel's news FoMO symptoms: 'I bought three newspapers before getting on to the train this morning: Megan has been missing for four days and five nights and the story is getting plenty of coverage' (Hawkins, 2015, p.79). Rachel buying three newspapers indicates a compulsion to consume as much information as possible about Megan's disappearance. News FoMO behavior is encouraged by getting updates through media (Alt, 2015). This behavior is encouraged by a fear of missing out on updates or details about the story, demonstrating a classic example of news FoMO. The utterance by Rachel, 'for four days and five nights,' highlights the ongoing nature of the news story. Rachel's need to stay updated reflects FoMO, and she will miss significant developments if she does not continuously follow the media coverage. This behavior reflects her interdependence and the FoMO process, as she actively seeks information by herself. News FoMO is viewed as a problematic attachment to media and is linked to various negative life experiences and emotions (Gupta & Sharma, 2021).

Further, Megan Hipwell also suffers from a perception fear of missing information. Here is the following quotation that portrays Megan's desire for news FoMO: 'Scott isn't home when I get back, so I get my laptop out and google him, for the first time ever. For the first time in a decade, I look for Mac. I can't find him, though' (Hawkins, 2015, p.53). When someone tries to get updated information via social media sites, it portrays news FoMO (Alt, 2015). Many search results that Megan encounters hundreds of Craig McKenzies reflect the broader issue of information overload in the digital age. Her difficulty locating the person she is looking for indicates the challenge of navigating a lot of information, a common issue tied to news FoMO. Emotionally, Megan's search for Mac suggests a deeper, unresolved curiosity or concern about his current situation. This emotional drive leads to her FoMO, as she fears missing out on important developments in the life of someone who was once significant to her because Mac is



her ex-boyfriend. Additionally, the fact that Megan has not searched for Mac in a decade but suddenly feels compelled indicates an underlying and unresolved curiosity. Through this, Megan only wants her life to be normal like the others by trying to clear unresolved events from her terrible past.

Another perception of FoMO on information also occurs to Anna. The following quotation presents Anna's behavior of news FoMO on important information because she suspects her husband, Tom Watson, is cheating on her:

'I cracked the laptop password eventually: it's Blenheim. As innocuous and boring as that – the name of the road we live on. I've found no incriminating emails, no sordid pictures or passionate letters. I spend half an hour reading through work emails so mind-numbing that they dull even the pain of jealousy, then I shut down the laptop and put it away.' (Hawkins, 2015, p.245)

Anna's decision to crack the laptop password and search through the emails portrays a strong sense of curiosity and fear of missing out on potential secrets or important information about her husband's life. The cognitive aspect of FoMO is exhibited through negative ruminations, such as constantly checking and refreshing social networking sites for alerts and notifications (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). This behavior is motivated by a desire to uncover hidden aspects that might affect her relationship. In expectations against reality context, Anna expects to find incriminating or emotionally charged content, indicating her fear of missing out on significant, potentially life-changing information as she is afraid if her husband is cheating on her. However, the reality is boring, with only work emails present. Further, thoroughly searching the laptop reflects that Anna seeks to confirm no hidden threats to her relationship. This behavior is driven by a fear of being unaware or uninformed about important aspects of her husband's life, which ties back to the concept of news FoMO. News FoMO occurs when someone wants to know about others' activities through the media (Alt, 2015). Moreover, the behavior of Anna breaking into her husband's laptop without permission is an invasion of privacy, reflecting the extent to which FoMO can drive individuals to cross ethical boundaries.

4.2 Narcissism Construction through FoMO in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*

This subchapter will explain the influence of FoMO constructing narcissism that each character suffers through Rachel Watson, Megan Hipwell, and Anna Watson. The characteristics of narcissism by Freud, such as megalomania and self-love, will be identified as narcissism constructed by FoMO. How each character suffers from FoMO to narcissism will be explained below and divided into two parts: First, FoMO constructs megalomania as narcissism. Second, FoMO constructs self-love as narcissism.

4.2.1 The Construction of Megalomania as Narcissism through FoMO

Rachel's social FoMO triggers her narcissism, leading her to claim she is part of the mystery. The following quotation proves the narcissism that Rachel suffers: 'No, it's because I feel like I'm part of this mystery, I'm connected' (Hawkins, 2015, p.82). Rachel's desire for authority triggers her self-validation, leading her to believe she has power and will not miss out. Thus,



Rachel reflects an authoritarian personality by wanting to become a dominant figure in the mystery. Authoritarians always want to be the dominant figure because they love to control people to gain personal advantages (Pratama & Aji, 2017). In advantage of this mystery, Rachel seeks self-admiration from others that she can solve the mystery, particularly from her ex-husband, Tom Watson. The quotation illustrates Rachel's delusions of grandeur or an inflated sense of self-importance. Rachel's utterance reflects an underlying megalomaniac tendency, as she perceives herself as an integral part of something significant. Megalomania is an overestimation of the power of one's wishes and mental acts (Freud & Strachley, 1966).

Another way FoMO constructs megalomania as a characteristic of narcissism is through Megan's actions. Although Megan gets rejected to stay connected with Dr. Kamal, her social FoMO encourages her to the grandeur that she cannot be rejected by anyone else. The following quotation portrays the grandeur of Megan:

'So I followed him home. He lives in a flat just down the road from the practice. I knocked on his door, and when he opened it, I asked, 'Is this appropriate?' I slipped my hand around the back of his neck, stood on tiptoe and kissed him on the mouth.' (Hawkins, 2015, p.54-55)

The grandeur and authority lead Megan to follow Dr. Kamal in his home, although he rejects her. In the quotation above, Megan's FoMO indirectly relates to megalomania, which is reflected in the character's actions and sense of entitlement. In the quotation, following the person to his home and confronting him directly shows an arrogance to disregard social norms and boundaries. Narcissism is encouraged by arrogance behavior showing that they are the best and cannot be rejected (Pratama & Aji, 2017). Her behavior demonstrates a grandiose belief in her right to assert herself in his private space and life. Additionally, Megan's question, 'Is this appropriate?' followed by an assertive kiss, indicates a sense of superiority and inflated belief in her importance so Dr. Kamal can admire Megan.

The discovery of how FoMO delivers narcissistic symptoms can also be seen in news FoMO from Anna. The way her news FoMO led to cracking her husband's laptop without permission was driven by Anna's sense of authority and stubbornness, believing she had the right to check her husband's privacy. Stubbornness can lead to narcissism by causing someone to ignore others and focus on themselves (Pratama & Aji, 2017). Further, Anna's stubborn personality, as she wanted to satisfy her FoMO, was proven by her successful cracking on her husband's laptop after many attempts.

The following quotation presents Anna's FoMO constructing her narcissism from her stubbornness and authority, revealing that her husband was not cheating on her based on her findings: 'I'm feeling really quite jolly, thanks to the wine and the tedious contents of Tom's computer. I've reassured myself I was just being silly' (Hawkins, 2015, p. 245). The transition from Anna's news FoMO to her feelings, as illustrated in the quotation, demonstrates how her sense of authority and control (cracking the password and searching for evidence) leads her into narcissism. Her relief and jolliness, despite the unethical nature of her actions, reveal a lack of empathy and self-reflection, key traits of narcissism. Thus, these behaviors encourage a sense of superiority and entitlement, characteristic of megalomania.



4.2.2 The Construction of Self-love as Narcissism through FoMO

After suffering from social FoMO, Anna's narcissism is constructed through self-love. The following quotation will illustrate it: 'The thought that she and I – fat, sad Rachel and I – are now in the same boat is unbearable' (Hawkins, 2015, p.259). The expression by Anna, who says she and Rachel are 'in the same boat,' is 'unbearable' to Anna. This idea suggests that Anna's narcissistic self-love cannot tolerate her being equated with someone she deems inferior. Narcissism finds itself possessed of every valuable perfection (Freud & Strachley, 1966). Therefore, Anna's social FoMO indirectly constructs her narcissism, indicating that she views herself as perfect and incomparable to Rachel.

Further, the news FoMO from Rachel constructs her narcissistic behavior regarding her self-esteem, which leads to self-love. The following quotation provides a description of the narcissism Rachel suffers from: '(Reading this, I feel desperately sad for Megan. I realize that perhaps, after all, she isn't so different from me. She's isolated and lonely too)' (Hawkins, 2015, p.80). Rachel's reaction to Megan's isolation and loneliness, as described in the quotation, exemplifies Freud's concept of self-love and narcissism. Through identifying with Megan, Rachel reinforces her self-regard and maintains her narcissism. This identification is not purely empathetic but serves to validate Rachel's feelings and experiences because she values herself as not so different from Megan. Narcissists have a type that they would like to be, and individuals may choose their love objects based on narcissistic types, which include what they are, what they once were, what they would like to be, or someone who was once part of themselves (Freud & Strachley, 1966).

Megan's news FoMO also constructs her narcissism through self-love, which leads to her excessive confessions. The following quotation illustrates how Megan self-admires herself: 'There are hundreds of Craig McKenzies in the world, and none of them seems to be mine' (Hawkins, 2015, p.53). Megan's statement, 'none of them seems to be mine,' reflects how her narcissism stems from her news FoMO. She likely failed to move on from Craig McKenzie, her ex-boyfriend, even though she is already married to Scott Hipwell. Megan's behavior of stalking her ex-boyfriend indicates a type of narcissism based on self-love, as she believes she still deserves a part of Craig McKenzie. A narcissist is a person who may love someone who was once part of their life (Freud & Strachley, 1966).

5. CONCLUSION

This research explores the relationship between the concept of FoMO and the development of narcissism tendencies, as depicted in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train*. It reveals that FoMO, characterized by the perception of missing out on rewarding experiences and compulsive behavior to maintain social connections, can significantly contribute to narcissism, which is identified from megalomania, self-love, and personality.

The study highlights the relevance of FoMO in today's digitally connected society, where individuals are constantly exposed to other activities through media and information. This exposure causes a sense of inadequacy and social inferiority, which can bring narcissistic behavior as individuals try to validate their self-worth and social standing. The research findings



align with Freudian psychoanalysis which identifies traits like megalomania and self-love as core components of narcissistic symptoms that lead to narcissism.

Analysis of Hawkins' *The Girl on The Train* illustrates how literary works can mirror contemporary psychological phenomena, providing a rich context for understanding the dynamics of FoMO and narcissism. Further, the significance of this research lies in its contribution to the broader discourse on mental health and social media's impact on individual psychology, as represented by the literature. Through portraying how FoMO can lead to narcissistic tendencies, this study offers insights into addressing these issues in clinical and social contexts. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing interventions and strategies to mitigate the negative effects of social media and instant information on mental health.

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